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## **State of Wisconsin Department of Corrections**

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### **Wis. Dept. of Corrections Secretary visits Republic of Georgia Prison System**

**Madison, Wis.** – Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) Secretary Ed Wall and a delegation of DOC staff traveled to the Republic of Georgia where they attended the opening of the Rustavi 16 prison on July 16 at the invitation of the Georgian Prime Minister, the Minister of Corrections and the U.S. State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL).

Rustavi 16 is the first newly overhauled prison since the fall of the former Soviet Union and demonstrates the country's commitment to prison reforms. During their trip, the DOC delegation and State Department INL staff toured prisons in different areas of the country and also held high level discussions with the Minister of Corrections and his executive staff, the country's probation department and the Ministry of Justice concerning pre-trial detention.

The DOC has been involved with the Georgian Prison Reform project for more than a year helping with facility design, training of staff, inmate programming and other initiatives needed to reform their systems. These reforms became a priority for the Georgian Government following human rights concerns in 2012, which resulted in the resignation of the Minister of Corrections and several other officials.

Secretary Ed Wall commented, "It is an honor that the Wisconsin DOC was chosen by the U.S. State Department to partner in these critically important international missions of prison reform. Our department is highly regarded both nationally and internationally for the work that we do with incarcerated individuals and the methods we use in running prisons in Wisconsin. We will continue to demonstrate that effectiveness here at home and in helping our partners across the globe."

Two delegations from Georgia traveled to Wisconsin and met with DOC staff to engage in training, prison operation discussions and other areas of interest. Additionally, the DOC has sent five delegations to Georgia to assist in their reform initiatives and training. In particular, the Georgia delegations have focused on the introduction of Unit Management into their facilities as well as utilizing technologies like GPS locators for sanctions or pre-trial tracking as an alternative to incarceration. The Wisconsin DOC continues to work with the U.S. State Department INL and the Georgian Ministry of Corrections in prison reforms.

The Wisconsin DOC also partners with the State Department INL working with the country of Armenia, another former Soviet republic, in their prison reforms efforts. All costs associated with the programs are covered by the State Department.

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Wisconsin Department of Corrections Secretary Ed Wall speaks at the opening of Rustavi 16.



From left to right: Georgia Minister of Corrections Gorgi Mghebrishvili, Georgia Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili and Wisconsin DOC Secretary Ed Wall.